

## Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ISO-00 IO-10 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 AID-05

SSO-00 /090 W

----- 022260

R 050755Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4832

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 4891

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, HK

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG

1. HKG POLAD ALAN DONALD MET WITH CONGENOFFS THIS MORNING/MAY 5 TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT VIETNAMESE REFUGEE SITUATION IN HONG KONG FOLLOWING THE ARRIVAL OF 4,420 VIETNAMESE ON BOARD THE DANISH MERCHANT SHIP, CLARA MAERSK. DONALD POINTED OUT THE PROBLEMS FACED BY HKG WITH THESE REFUGEES: (A) THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE PRC ATTITUDE TOWARDS VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG; (B) SOME GRUMBLINGS ALREADY HEARD FROM THE CHINESE POPULATION ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHEN CHINESE SWIMMING TO HONG KONG ARE BEING ROUTINELY RETURNED TO THE CHINESE MAINLAND AUTHORITIES; (C) THE COST OF PROVIDING FOR THE REFUGEES AT A TIME WHEN UNEMPLOYED HONG KONG RESIDENTS CANNOT OBTAIN ANY ASSISTANCE FROM HKG SOCIAL WELFARE; (D) THE CONCERN THAT SOME OF THE YOUNG MAKES IN REFUGEE GROUP MIGHT SHORTLY BECOME IMPATIENT IF NO REAL PROGRESS IS BEING SHOWN IN PROCESSING THEIR CASE.

2. DONALD SUGGESTED TWO METHODS WHICH WOULD ASSIST THE HKG IN MEETING THESE PROBLEMS, WHICH HE ASSUMES WILL INCREASE IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO THE AMOUNT OF TIME THE

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VIETNAMESE REFUGEES REMAIN IN HONG KONG. FIRST, HE

CONSIDERED THAT SOME USG ACTION IN MOVING ALONG THE 67  
(58 FROM SWISS AIR FLIGHT AND 9 FROM AIR AMERICA FLIGHT)  
VIETNAMESE WHO HAVE BEEN IN HKG CUSTODY SINCE APRIL 29-30  
WOULD HELP DAMPEN SUCH CRITICISM. SECONDLY, DONALD  
STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT THE 4,420 NEW ARRIVALS BE PROCESSED  
IN GUAM RATHER THAN IN HONG KONG.

3. WE EXPLAINED TO DONALD CURRENT USG POSITION,  
CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC OPINION PROBLEMS, OVERCROWDED  
CONDITIONS AT GUAM, ETC. WE ALSO INDICATED THAT WE SAW  
ICEM PROCESSING OF SHIPBOARD GROUP AS DEFINITE PART OF  
INTERNATIONALIZING VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM AND ENABLING  
THOSE HAVING CLAIMS ON OTHER GOVERNMENTS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT,  
RELATIVES, OR WHATEVER, TO PURSUE THOSE CLAIMS. DONALD  
ACCEPTED THESE ARGUMENTS BUT INSISTED THAT, FROM HKG POINT  
OF VIEW, THE SOONER ANY REFUGEES WERE MOVED OUT OF HONG  
KONG THE BETTER AND THAT PERHAPS SOME ACTION ON THE EARLIER  
67 WOULD EASE THE HKG'S POSITION ON THE LATER AND LARGER  
GROUP.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT ANY ACTION WE COULD TAKE REGARDING THE  
67 EARLIER REFUGEES WOULD BE WELL APPRECIATED BY HKG AND  
WOULD ASSIST IN RETAINING CLOSE COOPERATION WE HAVE  
BEEN DEVELOPING WITH HKG AUTHORITIES ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEE  
PROBLEM. IT WOULD ALSO ENABLE THE HKG TO INDICATE PUBLICLY  
THAT AT LEAST THOSE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAD REMAINED IN  
HONG KONG ONLY TEMPORARILY AND THAT THE OTHERS WOULD  
PROBABLY BE MOVING ALONG TO OTHER RESETTLEMENT AREAS AS  
SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN THIS CONNECTION, DONALD INDICATED THAT  
SWISS AIR HAD INFORMED HKG THAT IT WOULD PAY FOR TRANSPORTA-  
TION OF 58 ARRIVING HONG KONG VIA SWISS AIR TO GUAM OR  
OTHER DESTINATION.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES, RELIEF (ASSISTANCE)  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 MAY 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975HONGK04891  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750156-0672  
**From:** HONG KONG  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750581/aaaacwrg.tel  
**Line Count:** 94  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ITF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <27 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG  
**TAGS:** SREF, VS, HK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006